

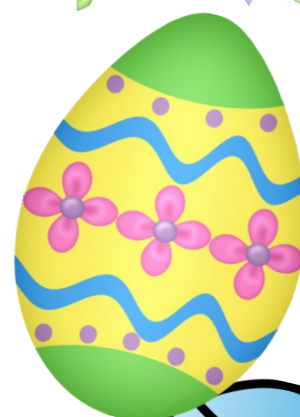
Independent Living News

Spring edition:

March 2025—May 2025



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If you would like a regular copy of the SIL quarterly newsletter, please forward your email address to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk

Deadline for article contributions in the Summer newsletter is Wednesday, 28th May 2025. Please email your content and any images to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk

Welcome from the Chief Executive, Euan McPherson



Hello everyone and welcome to the Spring edition of the SIL Newsletter.

You may well be aware of a lot of coverage in the media about the impact of the latest national budget on organisations as a result of increases in the cost of the National Insurance we pay. This comes at a time when many Social Care providers are struggling anyway, and has added a great deal of pressure across the sector.

I am pleased to say that SIL is in a reasonable position to deal with the increase in costs and that we are continuing to grow and expand our services.

We are however, like many organisations, heavily impacted by the amount the local authority pays us to provide services and we are currently waiting for the rates for 2025/26 to be announced.

The impact of the budget on Social Care has been picked up nationally and there are a range of activities taking place to make the Government aware of the potential implications. It is interesting to note that there was a large march to Parliament Square in London this week, but that it got very little attention from the mainstream media. I'm sure that wouldn't have been the case if it was about the NHS; please do make this point if for any reason you have contact with your local MP, or local councillors.

I hope you all have a wonderful Spring and that we see some drier and warmer weather over the next few months.

"Spring will come and so will happiness. Hold on. Life will get warmer." - Anita Krizzan

Best Wishes - Euan, SIL Chief Executive

Become a Trustee



SIL is a multi-award-winning Herefordshire based charity which supports disabled people and elderly people to gain and maintain independence and live the lives they want in their own homes and communities.

We are currently looking for additional trustees to join our Board and play a major part in shaping the future direction of the organisation.

Our trustees work with our managers to develop future plans and steer the organisation. It's a rewarding and enjoyable role that can make a real difference to the lives of the people we support, while supporting trustees to learn new skills.

We are looking for people with good interpersonal skills and who enjoy team working. In particular we are seeking people with lived experience of disability, or experience as a family carer. You do not need to have been a trustee before as support is available from our existing experienced trustees, who meet monthly and training can be provided. SIL is an accessible organisation and we welcome applications from all ages and backgrounds. All meetings are available via Zoom for anyone preferring to join from home rather than travelling to the office.

If you are interested in joining SIL as a trustee, please contact Euan McPherson: ewan.mcpherson@s4il.co.uk or call: 01568 616653 for an application pack.

For more information about SIL, visit: www.s4il.co.uk

Help Towards Energy Costs



Funded by
UK Government

Herefordshire.gov.uk

GET £250 TOWARDS YOUR ENERGY BILLS.

**FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR HOUSEHOLDS
WITH INDIVIDUALS THAT USE
'HIGH ENERGY' MEDICAL EQUIPMENT.**

THIS INCLUDES EQUIPMENT SUCH AS:

- VENTILATORS
- DIALYSIS MACHINES,
- OXYGEN CONCENTRATORS
- FEEDING PUMPS



**SCAN FOR
MORE INFORMATION**



Singing for the Brain



Singing for the Brain brings together those living with dementia and their partners/carers in a friendly, fun and social environment.

There are two groups in Herefordshire, one in Ross on Wye, which meets at Walford Village Hall, Walford Road, Walford, Ross-on-Wye, HR9 5QS and one in Hereford, held in St Martins Church Hall, Ross Road, Hereford, HR2 7RJ.

The Ross on Wye group will meet on the following Wednesdays between 2pm—3.30pm: 5, 12, 19 and 26 March, 2 and 30 April, and the 7, 14 and 21 May.

The Hereford group is scheduled to meet between 10.30am—12pm on the following Wednesdays: 5, 12, 19 and 26 March, 2 and 30 April, and the 7, 14 and 21 May.

There is no charge for attending, but a suggested donation of £2 per person would be welcomed.

For more information call 07756 771134 or email denise.wood@alzheimers.org.uk

70 Years Old and Working Harder then Ever!

Herefordshire Mencap are celebrating 70 years supporting people in the county and as it's their Platinum Anniversary they would like to invite anyone who has known them during this time to a very special celebration.

Join them on Friday 11 April, 6.30pm - 10pm

Charles Bar, Left Bank, Hereford, HR4 9DG

Midnight Mayhem and Andy's disco will entertain us.

Karaoke

Easter Egg Raffle

If you'd like to be a part of the festivities please contact Rose: 07969 524 476

Email: rose@herefordshiremencap.com

PS—They are not retiring!



Sing Choir Sing

The Courtyard Hereford is hosting a concert on Friday, 14 March at 7.30pm, featuring eight of Herefordshire's finest community choirs and singing groups. Choirs include the RNC Choir, the Veterans Choir, Choral Diversity, and the Hereford Youth Choir.

The concert will raise money for both The Courtyard, a fully accessible arts venue in the heart of Hereford, and Encore Enterprises, a Community Interest Company, supporting access to music services in the county.

Tickets are available from the box office, 01432 340555 and cost £23 pp with concessions at £22.



Herefordshire Museum Services Need You



Herefordshire Museum Service is carrying out a major redevelopment of its building on Broad street, Hereford, which also allows them to have a major overhaul of their systems and approaches.

The team are looking for a number of steering groups to help guide and shape the new museum and one member of the team, Ben, is hoping to set up an "access panel" to have both input into the physical structure of the museum, its displays and ambience, as well as planning future development and activity, and what this might look like.

If you have accessibility issues yourself and would like to get involved with this project and become part of Ben's panel, please let him know. As a starting point you will be invited to go along and meet Ben at the Resource Centre, 58 Friars Street, Hereford, to view the collections and discuss the project. You are welcome to have someone with you if you need support. For more information or to arrange a date to meet Ben,

email: Benjamin.Moule@herefordshire.gov.uk

**Herefordshire
Museum Service**



Helping Hand for Isolated Communities



The Severn Wye Energy Agency is a sustainability charity working across Wales and the English border counties supporting people to overcome fuel poverty and providing expert, impartial advice on energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.

They use their 25 years' experience to support tenants, homeowners, landlords, businesses and community organisations to manage their energy use, stay warm and healthy, cut costs, and contribute to the UK's net zero goals

Much of their work is with people living in isolated rural areas who can't typically access regular sources of advice, and more recently they supported a group of Ukrainian residents who were passionate about understanding the UK energy system and but been unable to find help elsewhere. The issues helped with are common to many other communities, including advice on the priority services register, fuel vouchers, energy credit, incorrect tariffs, and smart meter installations.

They give community-based support through events and home visits for eligible clients, and can offer sessions and materials in multiple languages.

If you would like one of their energy experts to speak to a group you belong to, or think you may be eligible for a home visit, email them: communityadvice@severnwye.org.uk

Spring Plant Fair



An event that gardeners cannot afford to miss is taking place on Wednesday, 30th April at Garnons, Byford, HR4 9JX.

A spectacular Spring Plant Fair will run from 10.30am—4pm featuring a range of beautiful, interesting and unusual plants as well as advice from producers of garden related products.

The entry includes the opportunity to explore the stunning gardens and arboretum at Garnons, which is rarely open to the public. From 1pm there will be specialist horticultural talks and refreshments will be available throughout the day.

Entrance is £7.50 payable on the day. (No dogs allowed, other than assistance dogs)

All proceeds from the day are going to the Cart Shed Charity.





**Herefordshire
and Worcestershire**
Integrated Care System



**Herefordshire and
Worcestershire**

Use the right service



NHS App

Repeat prescriptions.
GP test results. View
health records. Find
information & advice.



GP advice

Persistent symptoms.
Chronic pain. Long-
term conditions.



NHS 111

Feeling unwell?
Need medical advice?
No GP to call?



Minor Injuries

Breaks and sprains.
Minor burns and
wound infections.
Cuts and grazes.



Pharmacy

Minor ailments.
Bites and stings.
Upset stomach.
Medication advice.



A&E or 999

Choking. Severe
chest pain. Breathing
difficulties. Blood
loss. Stroke. Sepsis.

Want to learn more about services in your area?
Visit www.hwics.org.uk/our-services



ECHO Families & Carers Group



Join the Echo team every month to find help and support, share experiences and meet new people. The team can help with a range of issues including legal and financial matters, mental and physical health concerns, and wellbeing issues for both you and the people you support and care for.

The groups meet on the first Monday each month in Leominster, at 4 Buttercross Arcade between 10am—12 noon, and on the first Wednesday each month at the Belmont Community Centre, Hereford between 12.30pm—2.30pm.

Anyone can drop in for a coffee and a chat—for more information call Echo on 01568 620367

Blue Monday Conference

SIL, Hereford Men's Mental Health Group (HMMH) and Community Fund worked together to provide a mental health conference for mental health professionals in Herefordshire that focused specifically on Men's Mental Health. The event was seen as an opportunity within the county to help continue the conversation around Men's Mental Health and provide networking opportunities between organisations in Herefordshire that work in the mental health field. Through funding acquired through the Community Fund, SIL and HMMH were able to organise the conference, and it was agreed to host the event on the 20 January, Blue Monday.

The day provided several guest speakers from the field of mental health as well as a Q & A and networking session. Many of the organisations represented had stands where delegates were able to collect information and make links with other groups.

The event highlighted several areas which delegates will now work on to forge better links enabling more targeted and effective support to men in Hereford who are struggling with their mental health. These measures will include more collaborative working, clearer signposting between organisations, raising the profile of support available, recognising fathers as one of the more vulnerable groups, and doing more in the field of suicide prevention.

If you would like more information about HMMH, or would like to attend one of their meetings email: HMMHgroup1@gmail.com or texting 07376 727280



Peterchurch Hub—updates



The volunteers at the Peterchurch Hub would like to share the following information, so that if you live nearby you can make the most of this lovely community venture.

The Library is open Wednesdays and Thursdays 11am—1pm; Fridays 11am—1pm and 2pm—4pm; Saturdays 10am—12 noon.

Café opening: Tuesday—Friday 11am—2pm. Pre-school Play & Café, Thursdays 9am—11am. Youth Café, Thursdays 5pm—7pm.

Stillpoint Meditation: Wednesdays, 12 & 26 March and 2 & 16 April. Booking not required.

Community Choir: Mondays 6pm—7.30pm, term time only. Call Joy 07903 675012 for more information.

Wellbeing & Support

Citizens Advice Bureau

Friday 7th & 21st March & 4th April

Free confidential and impartial advice available.

To book text “Peterchurch” to 07860077311, call

03448269685 or email

advice@citaherefordshire.org.uk

Social Prescriber Drop-in (Signposting Service)

Thursday 13th March

11am - 1pm no appointment required.

NHS Health Visitor's Well Baby Clinic Drop-in

Every Thursday 10am - 11am during Pre-school Play

Café open for drinks & snacks

NHS Health Visitor Monthly Clinics

Please call 07870682711 to book

First Tuesday - Community Nurse : 9am - 1pm

First Thursday – Weaning Workshop : 11am - 12 noon

Second Tuesday – Health Visitor : 9am - 1pm

Third Tuesday – Nursery Development : 9am - 1pm

Fourth Tuesday – Ante-natal group : 10am - 12 noon

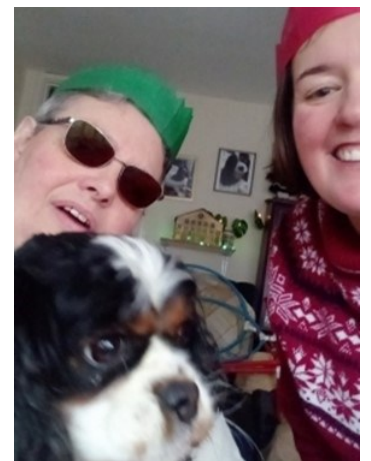
A vibrant yellow poster for 'Pre School Play' at St Peter's Church. The text is in large, bold, blue and orange fonts. It includes the 'the hub @ St Peter's' logo, the event name 'PRE SCHOOL PLAY', the time 'THURSDAY 9AM-11AM', the location 'The Hub at St Peter's Church, Church Road, Peterchurch, HR2 0RT', and the details 'Free Admission - Café Open', 'Lots of toys comfy sofas & wifi', and 'Health visitor 10am - 11am'. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'COMMUNITY FUND' and a colorful illustration of a train.

 **PRE SCHOOL PLAY**
THURSDAY 9AM-11AM
The Hub at St Peter's Church
Church Road, Peterchurch, HR2 0RT
Free Admission - Café Open
Lots of toys
comfy sofas & wifi
Health visitor 10am - 11am


Winter snapshots from Independent Living at Home

Our service users have sent us lots of photos of what they've been up to during the past few months. We enjoy seeing how busy they've been, so we'd like to share with you some ILH snapshots for Winter 24-25.

Thanks to all our support workers who take the photos.



Winter snapshots from Homecare Services

Homecare support workers have been making some short videos of service users, but unfortunately we can't share those here! But, we have lots of lovely photos below, including the Valentine's Day celebrations. If you'd like to see the videos you'll need to keep your eyes open on SIL's Facebook and Instagram!

Thanks to all our support workers for sending in the photos.



Come to Our Easter Egg-stravaganza



We are delighted to announce our annual Easter celebration which will take place at our offices in Leominster on Wednesday, 23 April between 2pm—4pm.

If you're feeling a little blue after the winter, this may be egg-actly what you need to cheer you up! There will be refreshments, games and a raffle to support our Charity of the Year for 2025, *Accessible Herefordshire*.

This egg-ceptional annual event is always a winner with our service users and friends, so if you would like to join us please let us know by emailing: reception@s4il.co.uk

Photo left: SIL service user Sheila with Team Leader Donna enjoying the petting lamb at last year's event.

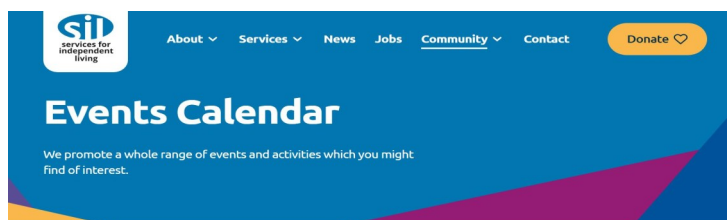
The New Events Calendar

SIL's new website landed at the beginning of the year and one of its new features is a useful events calendar.

But we don't like to be selfish and so we hope to host information about all sorts of events and activities that might be of interest to our services users, staff and of course our wider SIL family. We are beginning to populate it, but we need content to make sure it's as useful and easy to use as it can possible be. If you are hosting an accessible activity or event, or you belong to an organisation that runs regular sessions that may be of interest to our website browsers, then please let us have the information.

Posters are always good to link to, but we can manage without if you have nothing to send. Simply send details of your event/activity/sessions to shelagh.callaghan@s4il.co.uk and we will try and have them live online within the week.

In the meantime, why not have a look at our new website and of course, the events calendar. www.s4il.co.uk/events/ or, if you're on the website, click Community page.



Our Upcoming Events

Clever Betsy's Pop-Up Shop



Clever Betsy is an ECHO Social Enterprise project providing Day Opportunities for adults with learning disabilities. They are a tight knit team of paid staff, volunteers and participants who vary in age and ability.

Based in Leominster they are an arts & crafts project with a particular focus on upcycling and producing a range of high-quality crafted items to sell in the ECHO shop and various other outlets within the community.

On the 24, 25, 27 and 28 March between 10.00am - 3.00pm, they are hosting one of their fantastic pop-up shops at Leominster Library, Buttercross Arcade, where they will be selling beautiful handmade gifts, cards, fabric, yarn and craft items.

They rely largely on public donations of wool, fabric, haberdashery and art & craft materials. These are then either upcycled within the project activities or sent directly to the ECHO shop for sale. If you have any items you would like to donate please contact Clever Betsy on 01568 620307

River Carnival Benefit Gig



The annual Hereford River Carnival is a creative and unique event celebrating the River Wye and takes place on and beside the river. The original River Carnival dates back before the 50's, with its floats created and brought to life by local communities and businesses throughout Herefordshire.

It was re-introduced in 2014 and since then has attracted thousands of visitors to this huge feel-good event. The event, which is totally free, is funded through crowdfunding, fundraising and donations, plus of course the time given by volunteers.

As part of the fundraising for this year's event one of SIL's support workers is helping deliver a benefit gig. The event which will host local bands Kinstrife, Jacko & the Magic Men and Turquoise Llama, takes place on 12 April at The Speakeasy, Left Bank Village, Hereford. It starts at 7.30pm with paid entrance on the door. Tickets are £6.50 or £5 concession.

For more information about the Carnival visit: rivercarnival.org.uk



*Different,
not less*

supporting your autistic family member

Are you the parent of an
autistic child or adult?
Would you like to gain
additional understanding
of their needs and support
for your own?

www.thecartshed.co.uk



March 6th 2025, for six weeks.

Four-hour session from 10-2 each Thursday.

Various topics will be covered across the course, which may help you to understand the needs of autistic people in your life. Each session will be rooted in neurodiversity affirming practices and run by individuals with lived experience. The course will also allow you to meet other parents with caring responsibilities alongside developing skills to manage your own well-being.

The sessions will take place in a quiet woodland environment at The Cart Shed, with an opportunity to gain experience of woodland craft skills, such as willow and rush weaving and whittling. Both parents are eligible to attend. This course is open to parents responsible for a person with an autism diagnosis, or self-identifying. These sessions are fully funded (which means you do not have to pay anything).

Fill in the registration form on our website, and mention the word 'PARENT'